Idaho Education Network
Program Resource Advisory Council (IPRAC)
February 9, 2010, Meeting Minutes
(approved by Council April 13, 2010)

The February 9, 2010 meeting of the IEN Program Resource Advisory Council was held in the Barbara Morgan Conference Room of the Len B. Jordan Building, 650 West State Street, Boise, Idaho.

ATTENDANCE
Members/Designate(s) Present:
Mike Gwartney (Vice Chair), Director and CIO, Department of Administration
Donna Hutchison, Idaho Digital Learning Academy
Rep. Wendy Jaquet
John Miller, Dean of Off Campus Instruction, College of Southern Idaho
Jerry Reininger, Director of Information Systems, Meridian School District
Alicia Ritter, President, Ritter Consulting – Strategic Communication
Shelly Sayer, Premier Technology Inc. (phone)
Brent Stacey, CIO, Idaho National Laboratory (phone)
Designates
   Rod Blaylock, alternate for Charles Shackett, Bonneville Jt. School District (phone)
   Allen Schmoock, alternate for Dene Thomas, Lewis-Clark State College

Others Present:

Sally Brevick, Office of the CIO	Debra Stephenson-Padilla, IEN
Brady Kraft, IEN	Joel Strickler, Qwest
Garry Lough, IEN	Mike Vance, ENA
Teresa Luna, Dept. of Administration	Steve Wagner, Syringa
Keith Murphy, Qwest	Eldon Wallace, Retired
Gayle Nelson, ENA (VTC)	Richard Wilson, Commission for Libraries
Mike Olson, Qwest	Greg Zickau, Office of the CIO
Jerry Piper, Cambridge Telephone Co.	

Call to Order
Director Gwartney welcomed members and guests present and called the meeting to order.

Approval of Previous Minutes
MOTION: Jerry Reininger moved and Alicia Ritter seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on December 8, 2009; the motion passed unanimously.

Student Feedback
The Council connected by video teleconference (VTC) to West Side High School where Supt. Melvin Beutler (West Side School District), Melissa Waddoups (Curriculum Director) and several students shared positive stories of how they have benefitted from access to dual enrollment courses through VTC technology.

Discussion followed regarding the tracking of students entering tertiary education. West Side High School has sent surveys to their students over the past 5 years but the results are not entirely reliable as the response has been about 20 or 30%. However Utah State University (where many West Side students continue their education) have tracked all their dual enrollment students.

Supt. Buetler stressed the importance of having someone local to champion the project and a facilitator who understands the needs of the students and how to fill the entry-level requirements of colleges and universities. There are currently no problems being experienced with schedules that do not match.

Strategic Measurements

Garry Lough provided the Council with an updated version of the strategic measurements. The subcommittee tasked with developing this tool had taken into account the requests made at the last meeting of the Council in December:
- Provide a multiple to offset the limitation of small versus large school districts.
- Simplify the weighting of the scoring based on the classes
- Disaggregate the three sections – high school / teacher professional development / community

It was noted that "high schools" refers to buildings and it should be recognized that some high schools comprise only three grades and the 9th grade would need to be added. It was also noted that until the student ID was introduced for longitudinal data, it would be difficult to ascertain the drop-out rate. A request was made about capturing qualitative data, however it was also felt that, as valuable as this might be, it would add to the paperwork and time involved, and care should be taken to not overburden the school districts.

With regard to the targets presented, the Council weighed up the need for managing expectations as a means of justifying the equipment, versus setting baselines at this early stage that do not include online courses. The current figures are based on VTC utilization but increased bandwidth is the biggest contribution by the IEN. The Chair suggested proceeding with the Strategic Measurements as they are, with the understanding that the target figures can be amended as more information is obtained. No objections were raised.

Legislative Update

Director Gwartney reported that the Senate and Education Committees had met jointly the previous week (February 4th) for an IEN presentation. West Side and Weiser High Schools had connected to the Committee by VTC to share their viewpoints which were well received. The Department of Administration had presented its budget to the Joint Finance & Appropriations Committee (JFAC) the previous day (February 8th), where more questions about the IEN had been put forward. Answers to some of the questions were going to be put in writing and there was likely to be further discussion, which was only right given that this is a large project impacting 200 schools and costing millions of dollars.

Rep. Jaquet commented that she was still uncertain of the criteria for subcontracting local providers and also the relationship between the IEN and the IRON. Director Gwartney noted for the record that he is the Chairman of the IRON Board. A question had also been raised at JFAC about the financial sustainability of the project. Rep. Jaquet felt it would be beneficial to share the West Side statistics and also to explain to legislators the distinction between "synchronous" and "asynchronous". Mr Lough noted that there was a fundamental concern about duplication, in terms of content as well as infrastructure. Brady Kraft shared a diagram depicting the connection between IRON and IEN. Mr Kraft will meet with interested IPRAC committee members to explain the diagram in more detail.

Communications Update

Mr Lough reported on the IETA/IASA Conference that had been held the previous week in Boise, it had been well attended and breakout sessions had included a discussion on what schools could expect once they were

connected to the IEN, reactions had been very positive. The House (Room EW42) and the Senate (Room WW54) both have VTC systems and have been assisted in using the equipment. Within the Dept. of Ed, the Div. of Child nutrition is using VTC to facilitate the training of lunch staff.

Curriculum Available
Mr Lough shared some initial data on higher education-to-high school classes being provided. It was noted that student numbers should be not confused with enrolment numbers where a student taking more than one class would be counted only once.

Implementation Status
Brady Kraft reported that eight additional sites were now connected and work is now underway to identify the last 24 school sites that need to be connected before June 30th. The IEN is currently at 66% of the implementation goal and Mr Kraft recognized Joel Strickler (Qwest) and Mike Vance (ENA) as having been instrumental in achieving this. 52 sites have VTC equipment installed, this is ahead of schedule.

Mr Kraft explained that it is preferable to work with an incumbent ILEC as they are equipped to work a VPN (Virtual Private Network). In any of the communities there may be a number of ISPs (Internet Service Providers) and if they only provide internet service, they seldom own a lot of their equipment and bandwidth and may in fact purchase these from a local ILEC, therefore they might not have the infrastructure to support a VPN.

ENA provides the single point of contact management and support for the entire IEN. They are contracted to monitor the status of the network 24/7 and will be the first to see problems, contact the relevant school and provide support. They also provide immeasurable support in preparing the e-rate application. Importantly, the support from ENA means that every school technician has just one number to call for assistance. ENA also provides a direct link into IRON which has connectivity to the northwest Gigapop, the UEN (Utah Education Network) and Internet2. This provides the IEN with a direct link to virtually every research institution in the US. It also provides an easy way for Idaho universities to reach the IEN without going over the public internet.

Donna Hutchison raised a concern about how the IDLA is depicted on the Interconnectivity Diagram, given that legislation states the IDLA is "a public school-choice learning environment" (Idaho code: 33-5502). Mr Kraft explained that the direction he had received was that the IDLA is a content provider and the IEN does not have funding to connect the providers in phase 1.

Technical Committee
Jerry Reininger reported that the implementation was on schedule, the committee had considered utilization and there was still room for bandwidth growth. Schools will shortly be able to see for themselves what bandwidth they have and are using. Qwest is preparing to bring a POP into Boise (currently going to Chicago). Dr Reininger noted that the IETA/IASA breakout sessions had been positive with no problems reported. Mr Lough had provided the Technical Committee with information regarding a clearing house for courses being offered across the State – the Dept. of Education is working on this and it should be available shortly.

Qwest
Joel Strickler reiterated that the schedule is on track for the completion of 80 sites in the first year. The weather over the winter had presented a number of challenges but the frost was now receding. Some cases were still on hold but this was being closely monitored. Mr Strickler noted that each school district and deployment of connectivity is unique, but the process overall has been streamlined.

ENA
Mike Vance reported that the deadline for E-Rate applications had been extended by one week. ENA had encouraged districts to sign their Letters of Agency and Forms 479, the level of success should be as good as last

year. Training had been undertaken following installation of equipment. The IETA/IASA Conference had been a huge success and it had been worthwhile having the IEN directors meeting directly with people. A query was raised as to whether the IDLA qualifies for E-Rate, it was confirmed following the meeting that it does qualify.

Other Business
Jerry Piper questioned whether there were any schools that were not taking advantage of the classes being offered over VTC. Mr Lough said there were only a handful, this is because some of the connections are overlapping with the start of classes. Mr Piper raised a concern about funding for the IDLA, which was considered a vendor in the IEN process, and how the rural schools would support the IDLA so that this opportunity was not lost. Mr Piper noted further that the reporting of success stories came from schools who had had VTC equipment in place *prior* to the start of the IEN. Mr Lough explained that in this way the IEN could use the lessons learned and reduce the challenges that other schools would face, it would make the adoption easier and raise the bar for greater achievement.

Mr Piper noted that the Sugar Salem story would have been impossible without the IEN and he queried how that message was getting out to other rural districts. Mr Lough explained that all success stories would be shared over time, whether through the website, newsletter or other medium.

Adjournment
The next meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Brevick, Office of the CIO